

# THE LONG WAIT!

AFTER a season of unrivalled benevolence, there is now nothing left for Wycombe Wanderers to do but hope, pray, and kick themselves incessantly in the posterior, while Enfield prepare for a final assault on their third consecutive Isthmian League title.

The Champions have every incentive to complete the amateur League-Cup double as a glorious send off for manager Tommy Lawrence, who next season takes over the role of Slough Town's team boss.

Needing three points to level and four for the Championship, they visit Clapton on Tuesday, May 19 for what should be an easy win; then 48 hours later comes the ultimate crunch with

## By MIKE WHITESMAN: Kingstonian 1, Wycombe Wanderers 1

the last Isthmian fixture of the campaign when Hitchin Town visit Southbury Road, and every player, official and supporter of the Wanderers, will be keeping fingers crossed for a miracle.

Wanderers should today be certain of at least a title play off. But instead they threw away their security with a ridiculously defensive second half against a Kingstonian team that gratefully accepted the chance to get back in the game.

One up at the interval and total masters of the pitch, Wycombe suddenly lost their nerves and all the flair they had produced in abundance in their three goal tanning of Barking the previous Wednesday.

After three minutes, Keith Searle showed he was in business with a low drive that only a two footed save from 'keeper, Dave Collyer could divert.

And 16 minutes later, Searle opened the scoring when a Johnny Hutchinson corner kick on the right found its way to him on the outside of a crowded goalmouth. Keith shot first time just inside the netting for the ball to rebound over the line.

But, briefly Kingstonian kept possession for long enough to apply some mid-period pressure.

Most of their goalscoring attempts were kept to long range though. For their main driving force, Bob Adaway, often had to slow down play to allow his frontrunners time to work up-

field before setting a new movement in motion.

The threat was never serious, and Wanderers were back in control well before the change round.

Just 45 minutes away from glory, Wycombe went in-explicitly into a defensive shell, that, without John Delaney, and Peter Suddaby (on midfield duty) seemed likelier to crack than usual.

It was both unnecessary and risky—and playing safe with just one goal advantage just didn't come off.

A Searle-Hutchinson-Horseman build-up ended with the former, crashing the ball against

the 'K's' crossbar via a promising over-head kick.

Adaway made best use of his mediocre material—an attack that rates no higher than ordinary—and fully earned the club's Player of the Year trophy awarded to him after the match.

He did much to keep centre-forward Charlie Marks still in the game even after persistent "stick" handed out to the youngster by centre-half for the day, Vince Faulkner.

Making their "push" for an equaliser, Kingstonian added freshness to their line up by replacing Keary with Bob Bromley after 71 minutes.

The home side survived a "near-thing" as Searle's 77th-minute shot was headed off the

line by Hawkins and Hutchinson headed wide seconds later.

A minute later, Collyer deflected Hutchinson's shot. But it was hardly against the run of play that Kingstonian levelled the scores eight minutes from time.

Bromley sent in a high level cross, which Maskell failed to clear cleanly and Marks was on hand to punish some poor defensive marking.

Seven minutes to play . . . and desperately Wycombe tried to add new zest by putting on Thomas for Faulkner. But by full time they were thankful for the away point they still had.

**KINGSTONIAN:** D. Collyer; A. Hawkins, M. Preston; G. Gayton, S. Markham, G. Dick; K. Keary (sub: R. Bromley, 71 mins.), K. Heath, C. Marks, R. Adaway, J. Doyle.

**WYCOMBE:** J. Maskell; K. Blunt, C. Gale; K. Stephenson, V. Faulkner (sub: D. Thomas, 83 mins.), J. Lilley, P. Suddaby, B. Baker, K. Searle, A. Horseman, J. Hutchinson.